

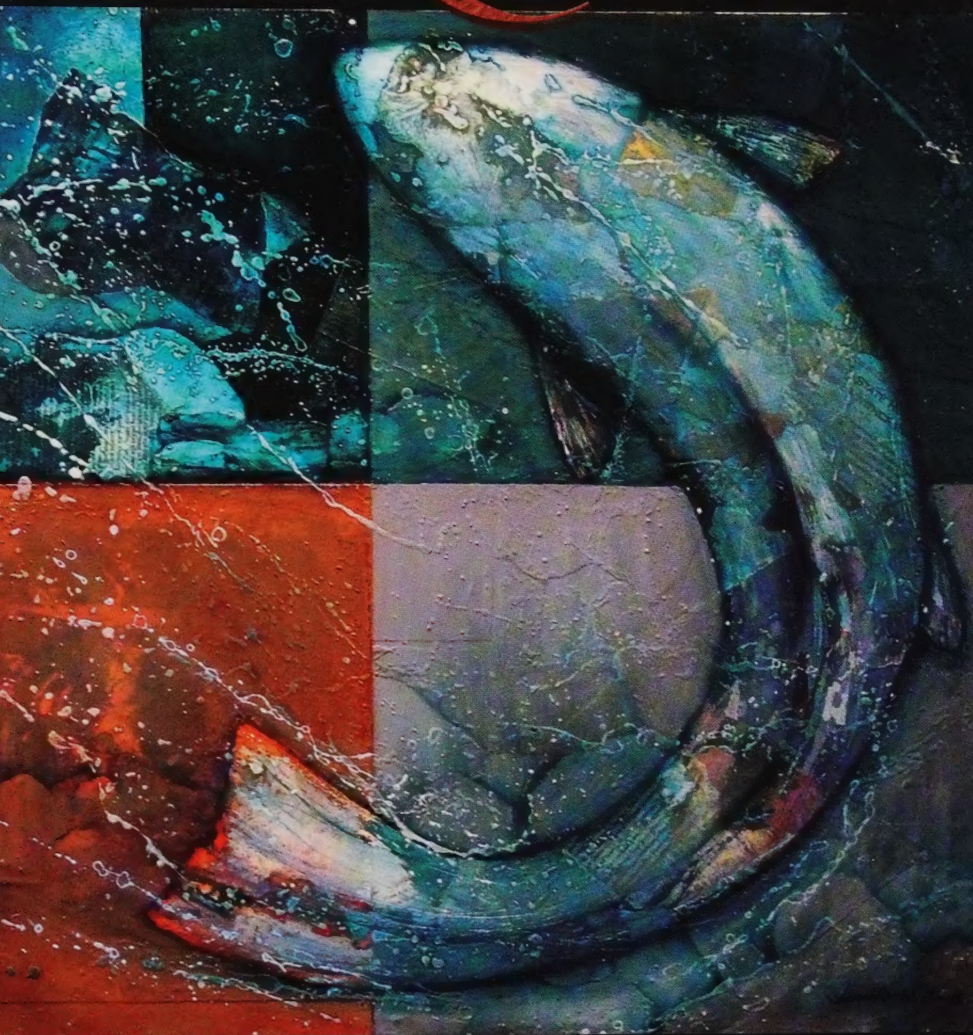
Archives

Rain

PER 810 R35

U.S.

Rain



2005

CLATSOP COMMUNITY
COLLEGE LIBRARY

MAY 16 2005

1680 LEXINGTON AVE
ASTORIA, OREGON

RAIN

2005

Rain is an annual production of the students at Clatsop Community College, Astoria, Oregon. Funding comes from Clatsop Community College and by the support of generous patrons.

All submissions were voted for acceptance by members of the staff.

No material in *Rain* may be reproduced without the author's written consent.

Cover: "Divvy" • Jennifer Williams, Artist
Courtesy of RiverSea Gallery

Cover Design: David rr Homer

Cover printing and binding:
Multnomah Printing, Inc.
1339 S.E. 8th Avenue
Portland, OR 97214
(503) 234-4048

Text and artwork copied by Ann Gydé of CCC.

Mail submissions for next year's issue to:

Nancy Cook, Dept. of English
Clatsop Community College
1653 Jerome Avenue
Astoria, OR 97103

between October 1 and January 10.

No more than 10 pages of prose or 5 poems. Please include a SASE for return, and include name, address, and phone number on the back of all entries. No electronic submissions, please.

Rain Editorial Staff 2005

Dr. Julie Brown: Faculty Advisor

Robin Andrea II: Correspondence

Jack Bartling: Correspondence, Proofreader, Winnower

Wanda Beck: Correspondence, Cover Design, Manuscript
Editor, Reception Coordinator

Bethany Bradley: Art Selection, Correspondence, Mock-up

Maureen Brosius: Font/Layout, Paper Selection

Claire Conklin: Proofreader, Winnower

Elaina Erola: Art Selection, Cover Design, Publicity

David rr Homer: Art Selection, Cover Design, Invitation &
Poster Design, Publicity

Dennis Maier: Art Selection, Mock-up

Chelsey Porter: Correspondence, Proofreader

James Pullman: Proofreader, Winnower

Mat Severson: Correspondence, Font/Layout, Proofreader,
Winnower

Tanya N. Teachman: Font/Layout, Paper Selection

Chrystal M. Zander: Font/Layout, Front/Back Matter,
Manuscript Typist, Winnower, Proofreader,
Corrections, Technical Expert

Table of Contents

Joy in the Journey	1
Rachel Steiner	
Liberty Theater	2
Photograph by David rr Homer	
The Burning of Christmas Lights	3
John Indermark	
Cool Water	4
Charles Holboke	
My Cousin Mike	9
Claire Conklin	
A Boat Builder's Daughter	10
Elaina Erola	
Lightning	11
Photograph by Ray Propst	
Beneke Creek Downpour	12
James Ricketts	
A Gentle Madness	13
Brian Harrison	
Siren's Song	14
Amanda Waisanen	
The River Passes	15
Brian Harrison	

Hands	17
Drawing by Gillian Hall	
Hands	18
Nancy K. Berry	
Her Owl Eyes	19
Jesse L. Mabus	
Face Painting	21
Painting by Tony Gardner	
Refrigerator Poem	22
Pallas Sophia Mabus	
Spine Art	23
Drawing by Tony Gardner	
A Mind of Their Own	24
Nancy K. Berry	
Requiem	25
Russel Hunter	
Troll Tree	26
Photograph by David Lee Myers	
Loving the Wild Forests	27
David Lee Myers	
Earth	32
Drawing by Kristin Shauck	
Way Back	33
Nancy Cook	

The Cruel, Old Western Reign of Doc Holliday	35
Jack Bartling	
What's Inside My Pockets	36
Grant Osborn	
Behind My Eyes	37
Mat Severson	
Shaping Clay	38
David Campiche	
Regret	40
Mat Severson	
It's a Beautiful Art	41
Charles Holboke	
Man	43
Drawing by Gillian Hall	
After-image	44
Florence Sage	
Another Thing I Forgot to Tell You	45
Abby Bandurraga	
Teapot	47
Drawing by Marion Oja	
Coming Home	48
James Dott	
Anne Frank	50
Claire Conklin	

Fallen	52
Sue Falkner Wood	
State	55
Bethany Bradley	
Drunny's Story	56
Tanya N. Teachman	
What I Want for Christmas	58
Charlene Weirup	
Is There Any Other Way?	60
David Lichner	
The Allure of Potato Pancakes	61
Karin Temple	
Roses	62
Elaina Erola	
Silence	63
Russel Hunter	
Tangible Losses	66
Nadine Faith	
Daydream	67
Bill Kaspar	
Iowa	68
Don Hutton	
Woman in Dress	69
Drawing by Gillian Hall	

She Sleeps Nights	70
Brian Harrison	
Faithless	72
James Ricketts	
Wisdom Image	73
Dennis Maier	
Fall Field Trip	74
Rich Trucke	
Child's Play	77
Vic Campbell	
Lack of Faith	78
Bill Kaspar	
Apocalypse Hymn	79
Dustin Hughes	
New World	82
Aleks Weir	
Delirium Tremens (DT's)	84
Jack Bartling	
'Taint Quite White	85
Don Overton	
What Darkness Have You Known?	86
James Dott	
Death Card	87
Florence Sage	

Torturous Math	88
Bethany Bradley	
Phillip Worthington III	89
James Pullman	
Bookworm	93
Rich Trucke	
Tall	94
Vic Campbell	
Saturday Night	95
Will Chapman	

For Julie Brown

Whose exceptional guidance and enthusiasm has
made *Rain Magazine* what it is today.

May your publishing endeavors not end with this,
your last, edition of *Rain*.

Joy in the Journey

Dark pathways bend sunshine on placid seas.
My journey through life winds under shadows,
By peaceful glades of tranquil rest and ease.
Among the waving gold fields and meadows,
By ruined castles crowned green with moss.
I've wandered over timeless sands, ancient
As shining stars, that o'er the heavens cross
And dance beyond the great blue firmament.
As them I glide, and climb, and wheel through life,
Toward the clouds, yet underneath the rain.
But if my road be coarse and filled with strife,
In valleys grow rich fruit from tears of pain.
So face the jagged mountain cliffs, blue skies,
For desert blooms are found by searching eyes.

Rachel Steiner

Liberty Theater



David H. Homer

The Burning of Christmas Lights

We went to Victoria to see Christmas lights this year.

The night scenes in Butchart Gardens did not disappoint:
Snowflakes drifted down in circuited sequence,
elf globes suspended in the stripped-bare branches of alders,
while we walked among strangers under the cover of
umbrellas--
so many mushrooms processing to each station of light.

The day scenes differed:

In the gardens, the magic of illumination came unmasked in
bundles of wires,
by groundskeepers replacing plastic lamps,
and with metal stakes whose flashing lights mimicked falling
flakes.

Downtown, the magic of illumination came undone in the
youth
we walked by, sleeping on the sidewalk by a heat exhaust of
the Empress Hotel
just outside the wall where inside high tea is served;
and the woman lying on the ground in front of Trounce
Alley's upscale eatery,
smiling at those who passed her,
whether in hope of loosening coins or retaining her dignity
against the cold.

We have been taught of late not to enable the panhandlers,
so we clutched our money as we kept stride and sight forward.
One asked for change, and when it did not come,
wished us a Merry Christmas.

John Indermark

Cool Water

I believe in being
in being forever young
In emily wherever
I might find her
in laughter
& tears
in a woman's soft
cushy breast
and in baseball
played on real grass
in a dog's smile
& my 5 or 6 senses
& I believe in the dreams
of youth, & the dreams
of the young,
in their pessimism, their optimism, their idealism,
that they may never die.
& I believe in the old
in the old parade
their uniforms,
and that they may find paradise.

I believe in good whisky
and a good pal
there at your graduation
and there again at
your wedding,
whisky on his breath
and a pat on the back.

I believe in what we see
in the light and
in the darkness
and that it both matters.
In wine, espresso, and beer,
But I believe mostly in water,
cool clear water,
and song
and in all things beautiful
and what I see in you.

I believe JFK was assassinated
by someone we have no idea
about,
& I believe in books, bells, and candles,
old movies, and letters I have
written and sent
and letters I have written
and never sent.
And in the sweet softness of skin
and of bare skin on
bare skin
and of the certainty of
human touch,

and in baldness, in
flatulence
and hair clubs for men
and for women.

In blond hair and black hair,
brown hair,
red hair, blue hair, green hair
blond eyes and blue hair, and vice versa,
Marble eyes and dead eyes and wide eyes
and bug eyes
and in your eyes, her eyes.

and in answers that
have no questions
And I believe in Beatles lyrics
that sing I should have known
better with a girl like you
that I would love
everything that you do,
yeah, yeah, yeah.

And in honest competition,
in winning and losing,
they're the same
really.

And in good good coffee,
not the kind
they serve at
the hamburger joint.

I believe that eyes speak
and sometimes words fail
and sometimes words hear
themselves, and die
on dead ears,

That a tree falling
in a forest
always makes
a sound.

I believe there are
always more
than two sides
to every
story.

And I believe schools
are dungeons and
most teachers
are heretics.
& in questions that have no answers

I believe that television commercials
have the truest grip
on the pulse, the real pulse
and the heartbeat
of the American people.

And so,
I believe in the
natives of Africa
and the Aborigines
of Australia.

But mostly in cool clear water,
a nose that can smell,
in you
and your nose,
broken or not,
your clothes,
and your bare toes...
and that maybe
in one crazy moment
you
will
too.

Charles Holboke

My Cousin Mike

his pale fingers twisted around the un-
matched jigsaw piece, body bent in deep thought
the small boy resembled his odd tool, one
whose lopsided grin and hallow eyes wrought
to set him apart, pity and forced
smiles overran his world, he stayed unaware
always the first to welcome guests, his hoarse
voice echoed laughter and love--what a rare
gift he had--our gruff old uncle gladly
yielded with open arms, smiles banished strife.
some may watch and shake their wise heads sadly
tallying the missing parts of his life
 but when his laughing eyes met my watchful
 gaze, I knew, the gaps made him beautiful

Claire Conklin

A Boat Builder's Daughter

In the Northwest, at the Columbia mouth
The wind can somehow blow both north and south.
Living in a place where money flows with the tide
Always waiting for the rain to subside.
I grew up as a boat builder's daughter
Watching my father weld and solder
I drove many boats up on blocks
Watched many launches from the bobbing docks
From an office in the shop, I watched him from up there
Drawing on his desk, climbing up those stairs
Sometimes, for no reason we would go on drives
In that pick-up truck, I saw both our lives
He taught me to throw beer cans into the back
And sometimes let me drive, up there on his lap
"Building boats is what I love" is what he liked to say.
Made me smile when I saw, a fisherman drive away
So happy with their brand new boat, out to go and see it float,
Leaving on a better note, and bundled in their winter coat.
But these days, Dad and I don't talk much anymore
I'm a little bit older, he's a little bit sore
Sometimes he's just been drinkin'
So I just forget it. Just start thinking.
He'll never forget all that he's taught her
And she'll never forget, she's a boat builder's daughter.

Elaina Erola

Lightning



Ray Propst

Beneke Creek Downpour

A thousand crystal explosions
escape the surface of Beneke Creek Road
only to surrender to physics
and settle back down into
rivulets, and streams, and puddles.

The waist high grasses beside
it bow in reverence... or is
it fear... to the first rain in months.
Even the car feels unsure of
itself in this elemental onslaught.

Only hours ago it spoke a sticky-
crackle as sun-baked tar bubbles
burst, but now whispers a bright
sputtering hiss as rainwater
flees the pressure of onrushing rubber.

Suddenly it ceases... The air so clear
it seems to magnify the emerald
distance... so clean the lungs
ache for a constant supply. But

the sun erupts from behind a
leaden comforter. Listening carefully,
you can almost hear the pavement...
begin to sizzle.

James Ricketts

A Gentle Madness

For JFH

Your river is the
the last honest thing,
asking nothing for itself
but a little freedom

to obey the rules of
rain in the mountains
and wooded slopes and
gravity as a constant.

You earn peace
wading in a trout stream,
standing still as a sandbar
while the universe floats by.

You gain wisdom watching
a vine maple leaf follow
the current around
a worn boulder.

Your worship is there,
rain dripping down your neck,
patience the watch you keep
on your fly thrown against

a sky edged with hemlock
and spruce
and cedar.

Brian Harrison

Siren's Song

The waves crash down against the jagged cliff
causing fine mist to shroud the rocks below;
all unrefined gemstones. Or, ships' death if
one of those with mast and men, pulled in flow
too strong, should drift asunder, called on wind
by heavenly voices singing to them.

The siren's song will make them wish they'd sinned
much less, the men will pull and clutch the hems
of the fine ladies of the sea who stalk
the waterways of traveling ships going
to port. With lust to guide, the men will walk
off ship; sailors lost as the tempests sing.
The beauty of a song will lure an ear,
be careful what you say, more what you hear.

Amanda Waisanen

The River Passes

We stare across the estuary,
eyes rimmed red from salt spray,
seeing the copper-hulled wooden
ships which sailed this water,

We listen for the ghost-rattle of chains,
the rough-voiced commands
no one remembers,

Behind us the river is ringed blue
with hills--we see each bay
each harbor
each inlet
each marsh
where once the water froze with
the whiteness of the moon.

Here rocks and trees share the wrinkled
flesh of old women and we breathe
a green patience of dead sailors,
nostrils flaring at the taste
of saltwater and rust.

So much has passed of what
the river gave us,
leaving us without a sense of touch.
We want to know the hands,

callused from working lines,
as the explorers with misty
glasses stood on deck and claimed
the land.

Brian Harrison

Hands



Gillian Hall

Hands

They are my grandmother's hands I see
when I place my own upon the table,
fingers crooked and cracked,
a patina of garden dirt.

Her hands could birth a baby
or wring a chicken's neck,
knead the tenderness into bread
and peel peaches for fifty quarts.

My hands grow old with other skills,
pushing buttons on phones,
typing on keys,
turning the wheels of automobiles.

Yet, I think they feel the same
when brushing tangles in a child's hair,
snapping beans for supper or
smoothing sheets fresh from the line.

When she held my hand in hers,
we did not know they were alike.
We only knew we were connected
hand to hand.

Nancy K. Berry

Her Owl Eyes - for Izzy Kukyendahl Mabus
21 Sep 2003

not a god of severity or mercy
no angry fire and utter damnation
nor the sorrowful joy of Gethsemane
hers was a god of growing things
both those of the seed and those coeval

in her compost pile we tasted sweet
the smell of earth becoming warm
becoming from the fecundity of decay
the rich loam which made camilla leaves
a most uncommonly large elephant ear

while she wrestled words into blocks & squares
i became an expert hunter of spiders
pecans rained like hail on the shed's tin roof
in dark corners of cigar boxes & coffee cans of nails
they fell prey to my jars gaping maw

like some idyll we swung on her porch
watching as she fed her charges
watering the rows of backyard veggies
on fence posts leaving bread and nuts for squirrels
an unusual queue of critters in her yard

but it wasn't all arcadian delights
there were hours bent down on our knees

scrubbing accumulated dirt from floorboards
of rent houses betwixt the flow of tenants
honest work was the severity of her hand

spite and malice marathons on the driveway
always and everyday soap operas and a nap
there was this break in the day--quiet
to soothe a heart as the day sped away
a siesta in the balmy heat of the houston heights

the click clack of bones on stone tables
or the clatter rattle of dice in a yahtzee cup
her games were the constant throughout
whether we were camped at the lake
or under the pecan heavy trees in the waning of summer

Jesse L. Mabus

Face Painting



Tony Gardner

Refrigerator Poem - Yule 2004

celebrating
fire longing
to beat away
the salt decay
an eye and ice
and you will dazzle
with night you will
see two almost are

Pallas Sophia Mabus, age 8



Tony Gardner

A Mind of Their Own

In winter, my thoughts stay close
following from room to room
willing to be examined,
turning to be shortened or lengthened
like the hem of a new dress.

Come spring, they scatter about
flitting inside and out.
Released from their captivity
some go forever, others return changed
with new growth like a spruce tree.

Summertime thoughts are shirkers
ignoring my summons and plea
preferring day-dreams and ice cream,
sometimes even going off
to the beach without me.

In autumn, those same thoughts gather
and rearrange themselves
bits in a kaleidoscope.
Under the colored glass,
there is sadness mixed with hope.

Nancy K. Berry

Requiem

One by one
five black ravens
fly silently
through
last summer's
clearcut.

Russel Hunter

“Troll Tree”



David Lee Myers

Loving the Wild Forests

I walk into a rainforest grove, one fortunate to have matured for a thousand years without a catastrophe of wind or fire, of slide or saw. The ceiling, the arboreal canopy, is lifted high into another world by columnar trunks stout beyond my measure. From a clear sky come shafts of hot sunlight, etching textures with inky black edges and painting crisp colors. I look toward the sun, into rays coming through green broad leaves and conifer needles, making stained glass windows in the forest canopy. This vast space is at once intimate and untouchable; no wonder it's so often felt as a cathedral. Close at hand the ornamental details are myriad and minute beyond recounting: Cup fungi--chalices for dew drops, spore capsules held aloft on thread-thin stalks, a heron's feather and, in my gentle fingers, the burnt orange belly of a wriggling rough-skinned newt.

Two worlds of light are interlaced--one in the sun, one in the shade. It's hard to see or photograph them both together, yet the shapely edges between the zones best convey the drama of life in this biological tapestry. When the sky fills with clouds, soft light wraps around edges, gently modeling the shapes of trunks, shrubs, and stone. I especially enjoy moments when the two kinds of light come into balance. Rain-wet leaves may add another dimension of reflected color and sparkle.

I have walked and photographed in many of the Northwest's old forests--both ancient forests which have never been logged, and others which have been cut, partially or long ago. Each one has its particular mix of leaves and space, of old and young trees of different species, and shrubs. In some groves the filigree of shrub leaves is made by

elderberries, in others by rhododendrons. I find Sitka spruce on the wettest foggy slopes and bottoms, Douglas fir on wind-ripped ridges. Why are there western red cedars in this grove but not in another? Everything I figure out in the woods or learn from books or people sharpens my observations and opens up new questions. Each plant, bird, or sound, every process in the forest life that I learn engages my attention to a new aspect of the woods and helps me see. A quiet mind and attention to the sounds and fragrances of the woods, the feel of the ground underfoot and the lay of the land, the breeze and the mist or rain, and the light, all help me become aware.

I visualize a cycle: A tree grows for many hundreds of years. It falls down, softens and decays for hundreds of years more. Its remains nurture another generation--seeds sprout on it, seedlings' roots growing first into the old log, then reaching around it into solid ground. Long after the fallen tree has melted into earth, it is remembered in the arch of the roots which remain, or in a straight row of trees whose beginnings it nurtured. To turn this great biotic wheel just once takes nearly a thousand years.

A tree's memory is not mental, fast, and fugitive like mine, but lies in the structure of its rings and trunk, its roots and branches, chronicling hundreds of years of opportunities accepted, difficulties overcome, and threats survived. Growth rings were fat in the wet years, spare in the dry ones. Swelling buttresses grew to brace against the storm winds. A trunk curved to compensate for the slumping of its earthen footing. Branches grew into unused light, avoiding the shadows of neighbors. Lightning pruned and scarred a tree, making more room for another to reach the sky's light. In such ways forests remember longer than do people.

My great love of forests is rooted in my photographing

the ancient forest remnants of southwest Washington. There I learned that when I tried to photograph just a single magnificent tree, my results disappointed me. Instead I discovered photographing forest communities, the assemblages of many trees and other plants whose lives intertwine in space, giving each other both shelter and competition. Gradually I learned more about these interconnections, which became a satisfying aspect of my photography.

I've also learned the joys of nearby, more ordinary forests that we all more readily encounter--younger woods in settled areas, re-grown logged areas, and even city trees and parks. Most people can get to parks or semi-wild lands near cities much more easily than to the more dramatic, typically more remote examples. The nearby ones offer enough to be rewarding, and even for those who know wilder woods, the nearby ones can be enjoyable reminders. An old, lightly managed second growth forest offers enough pleasures that it's important to keep in mind what's missing--the trunks eight or ten feet thick, and perhaps the old, decaying nurse logs. The most poignant reminders are the huge old stumps still showing the notches which held the springboards loggers stood on with their axes and saws.

I wonder if old forests will last? Humankind encroaches on them, harvests them, introduces unfamiliar competitors, and appears to be changing the climatic conditions of their very existence. It doesn't look good. Many species diminish and even disappear as the conditions for their lives vanish. Then the biological communities of which they are a part begin to weaken. If climate zones move north, can plants and animals follow along? Sometimes, but when the change is too fast, too far, they simply can't keep up--how

quickly can trees and mushrooms cover new ground? Mountains, lowlands, rainforests, and deserts are each hospitable to certain life while blocking many migrants which can't live there. No, it doesn't look good.

Do I want to resist these changes, to help reduce the losses? Of course: my empathy for the lives in the forests and in all of Nature impels me to. And even more, my love for the best possibilities in human awareness calls me to preserve the opportunity for people to engage a fascinating Nature.

Even if we, collectively, grievously wound Nature, in the long run Nature would nevertheless be fine. A few tens of millions of years and the complexities and subtleties would be restored. Nature has enough time. People don't. Our lives are now, and maybe in the next few thousand years, and whether or not those future lives are lived immersed in a soul-nurturing Nature, a Nature bigger than we are which thus keeps pulling on us and expanding us, that is a choice which we make with our conduct today.

Yes, conserving wildness does temporarily help Nature, yet because of the sufficiency of Nature's healing time contrasted with the immediacy of our human experience, what is ultimately at stake is our human desire for lives as deep and rich as possible.

Have we finished with Nature? Are we through being fascinated, being challenged, and discovering? Are we through being swept away in awe, being comforted, and responding with art? I hope not. What's special about engaging wildness? It's greater than our knowledge. Wildness is grander and stranger than even our imaginations.

Forests give me an experience of beauty and fascination, and I give to the forest my gratitude and thus my caring. When I am able to expand my consciousness

sufficiently, my separation from the forest, from Nature, dissolves: instead of me perceiving it, it becomes my way of perceiving. And instead of being its observer, I become its consciousness, its awareness of itself. Now I am at home, in my ancestral way, my home of enchantment. Nature and I are within each other.

I feel gratitude to the sun and earth, the weather, and the trees with their companion plants and animals for becoming these magnificent forest communities. I feel gratitude to the people who have preserved old groves in a society so oriented toward finding money wherever possible. The communities of enthusiastic citizens, government officials, and businesses which came together to keep these groves standing are just as complex as the forests themselves, and just as wonderful. Their efforts come to fruition whenever we walk in the woods, and whenever we, today, choose a similar gift to the future.

David Lee Myers

Earth



Kristin Shauck

Way Back

Back when burritos were a new-fangled food
& Briar's ice cream lived next to Gino's pizza

in the grocery because there was no such thing
as frozen yogurt yet. Back when Betamax

was the only way to watch a movie in your basement
& the "way back" was the rear part of the family wagon

where kids could ride without worry of being arrested for not
wearing a mandated seatbelt. Way back when

our house was a little Monticello & Robert E. Lee
had a cemetery that could make a girl turn dizzy

just from counting the national headstones. Williamsburg
was a place we took the cousins in the summer & Sea Colony

a bunch of condos on the Chesapeake. *Colonialism*
was a woman in calico who taught children to cast candles

out of wax. Afterwards, she changed into her real clothes
while Mom drove the wagon through traffic on the beltway.

Way back then-- *Tragedy* was a Beegees song & *terror* a buzz
the pinball machine makes when you hold the flipper for too
long.

Disaster was an accident: a plane gone down into an icy
Potomac icy hell. I don't remember the airline. I don't

remember the flight number. I do remember the snow day.
The sledding & cartoons. The popcorn & hot cocoa. *Vexation*

was the news anchor who interrupts the Gilligan Island rerun.
Grief was an announcement on the radio next day. *Arlington*

Public Schools are Open & On Time. No more sledding.
No more pinball. Baggies in our snow boots for the trudge

to school & at our desks the teacher wants five paragraphs
to make an essay: *What is a hero? & What defines an
accident?*

Who's going to rescue Gilligan tomorrow?
Now, tell me again, what, exactly, is a burrito?

Nancy Cook

The Cruel, Old Western Reign of Doc Holliday

The stakes are high
My generosity is low
All around-squinted eyes
Before I expel my foes

(cough, cough)

ONE! TWO! THREE! FOUR! FIVE! SIX!

Now Old Rudebaugh
 lays in his puddle of piss
Because Old Rudebaugh
 was an ignorant man
The dirty Old Rudebaugh
 I disapproved of his name and mortality

(cough, cough)

WHERE'S THAT WHORE??
To end my night of existence
A DRINK MORE!!
To Old Rudebaugh—good riddance!!

(COUGH, COUGH)

Jack Bartling

What's Inside My Pockets

A frog, a stick,
a shell, a stone,
a paper clip,
a chicken bone,
a feather quill,
a piece of string,
a lady bug,
a beetle wing.

A greenish wad
of bubble gum,
Assorted keys,
and cookie crumbs.

A maple leaf,
a candy bar,
a rubber band,
a model car.

Potato chips,
and soggy fries,
plus something
I can't recognize.
A broken watch,
a plastic cow...
That's what's inside
My pockets now.

Grant Osborn

Behind My Eyes

The coldness of a thousand winters sinks into my bones
Upon my chest there lies a weight of one thousand stones
The darkest night could never match the blackness of my soul
A thousand lives could not forgive the innocence they stole.

The jeering of one thousand souls haunts me from behind
The joy of heaven that I crave, I fear I'll never find
Every action that I take cements another sin
I say I love you and it's true, but I can never let you in.

My life's a long list of regrets and things I left unsaid
My mind is broken like unto the sacrament of bread.

Mat Severson

Shaping Clay

Sweat drips from his forehead
As a potter's wheel spins into late afternoon.
Cloudless August day and hot.
Slabs of soft clay--wedged
Into malleable balls--appear on the wheel head
Like cone-shaped mountains,
Tall and beckoning in a peerless Botticelli sky.

Clay shaped soon enough into small tea bowls
To be held quietly between both hands,
Painted to mirror the western shore
Where storms from the Pacific
Humble strongest egos.

You may see storm clouds on the side of the bowl,
Iron oxide brushstrokes with blazes of copper sunset
And magnesium-blue
Tangled sky.

And now January.
Kiln fired bowl, brimming with tea,
Lip curved inward
To hold in heat
On a cold winter morning.

Take and drink.

This rainy day
You might remember that searing summer sun,
Drawing sweat on the potter's brow.

You might feel the heart of August
Radiating from thin stoneware walls.

But will you feel love
Imbedded deep in the clay,
His fingers dancing
As the wheel
Turns?

David Campiche

Regret

The past becomes the present
To my mind
Like a startled pheasant
I must find
Refuge from the visions of
Despair
And the ghosts of abandoned love
For there
Are weights that bring any man
To his knees
And in my past I ran
From all of these.

Mat Severson

It's a Beautiful Art

It used to be
I'd be glad when
they'd go--
be gone,
and the talk, talk, talk,
was finally over.
It's an art, you know,
sending them home,
getting them to go,
When a NOT SO
SUBTLE, "Don't you
have to be home by
whatever time it is,"
doesn't work and "I
need to be alone" fails,
you need to get crafty,
you say, I got work
to do baby, food to put
on the table,
money to make,
so I can take you to nice
places, buy you hot clothes,
all those things you want.
Then they understand, shut-up
quick and leave.
Then I usually get a beer
and be thankful they're
gone at last, then
another beer
and some ball scratching.

But,
not with J.
something happened--
I try to think
of reasons for her
to stay--
not go.
I am a changed man,
she has changed me.
When she goes, I
miss her,
I think of things
I'd like to say
to her, or wish I had
said.
I'd like to watch
her walk naked one more time
from room to room,
or see her breast
come loose
once again,
that too is an art.

Charles Holboke

Man



Gillian Hall

After-image

Tell me that was you
at Sixteenth and Grand,
or am I going crazy
the way you said I would,

up the steep incline
half the town calls treadmill hill,
you know as well as I do
you'd never bother to climb,

so why were you striding past
the titled pale Victorians,
back to the wind off the swaying river,
flying your improbable hair

just at the corner of my eye
where emotions have their way,
that blurred dimension
you never used to walk in

where I always seem to catch
your quick sepia trace
and turn to follow,
now that you're gone.

Florence Sage

Another Thing I Forgot to Tell You

And then there was the time I went to the beauty school for a simple cut and dye job. Your mother drew my name. I had never met her before. Having never met me either she smiled at me like I was anyone who hadn't secretly shared nights sweeping questions and worries of you to the furthest corner of my mind.

The water was cool for the shampoo. Her long fingers worked slowly, scratched soapy rows in my hair. You were far off somewhere, California, Arizona, maybe. You were there in her shining eyes and her crooked smile. I began shaking at the sight of you standing in the space between her teeth.

"I love your son," I gasped out, not as strong as I wanted it to be. It sounded silly like that, all breathy like some cheerleader cooing out a secret crush. Her smile moved to a faraway corner. Her fingers never stopped working.

"So do I," she said back all cool, like she had heard those words fall out of a thousand mouths, in a thousand different shades of lipstick.

All of them trying to call you here, to make a sound that would keep you hanging in the air like a real thing.

When it was over, I walked out a darker brunette on shaky legs with extra money in my pocket. Her voice

low with sorrow, followed me down the sidewalk,
"This time, no charge, honey."

Abby Bandurraga

Teapot



Marion Oja

Coming Home

Let's say, after years and years away,
you come back to the house.
Walking up the street you see it's as it was before,
but without your hands, your time to keep things up.
Now small maples grow in the gutters, the paint is peeling.
You go up the steps slowly, testing each one for soundness,
carefully cross the porch to the door.
Your key still fits, still turns the lock.
You push the door open, its hinges squealing out of sleep.
Except a shallow gray snow of dust drifts everything
it's all as it was:
the sofa, the table, the chairs, one pulled out ready to sit in,
the pictures on the walls, the bookcase, your books, read and
unread.

Upstairs the blanket is folded at the foot of your bed
just as you left it.
Your reflection in the dusty dresser mirror is a blurred
phantom.
You look away, turn to the window, look out over the back
yard.
One of your shirts, faded past color,
hangs from one clothespin on the sagging line.
A breeze swings it towards you, then releases it.
You want to put it on again, button it as you used to, tuck it
in.
You go downstairs, through the kitchen, out the back door,
down the steps,
wade through the tall grass and weeds, and reach out
taking the clothespin between left thumb and fingers,

grabbing the collar in your right hand.
You have to press hard to open it.
The tail stays stiffly crimped over the line,
the shirt does not drop.
You do not pull it off,
but close the clothespin back around it and step away.
It lifts up in the breeze, then falls, twists, straightens, goes
still.

James Dott

Anne Frank

hate pulled me from the life I loved
a life of terrorizing teachers and riding bicycles
with my friends, like any thirteen year old
I climbed those cold, dark stairs
each step echoing with voices I knowingly surrendered
the deep, musical howl of the icy wind
the low, droning sound of my school teacher
and the high, screeching noise of my bicycle's brakes
the memories ceased their chorus with the gentle
closing of
a door

physically captured, held prisoner in a place
with no formal lock or key, only the tall, stern guards
of hate and fear entrapped us
we rationed our movements with the same care
used to measure our food, footsteps were allotted
by the chimes of a clock outside the window
because an eavesdropped tiptoe was the balance
between life and the stealthily breathing death
tied by these cords of restriction, bodies growing cold
and frail with the passing days of confinement
unused energy pulsating inside, the pressure building
sent my mind racing, the fountain pen clasped by my
red fingers is the only thing moving faster
than my hurricane of thoughts
it bled untapped, black ink immortalizing my struggle
winter months gnawed at my body, cheekbones and ribs
became more pronounced and hunger was an insistent demon
but my mind and pen thrived, unaffected by the threats of

hate and fear that so maimed my body
I survived by the refuge of my curling black scrawl
appearing slender and indelible against an ivory page

Claire Conklin

Fallen

They said you fell
On the field of battle
As if you simply tripped
While hiking through the woods

Felled by a sniper's bullet
Your battlefield was far from home
On soil strange to us

To say I will miss you
Is too small
Too mundane

You have been amputated from me

More vital to me than air
You fill my thoughts
Both night and day

I forget to eat
To bathe
To breathe

When I remember
And inhale you are there
The fragrance of your skin
On the pillow next to mine

I long for the everyday
Inconsequential acts which loom large
In my memory

Socks on the floor
The toilet seat left up
The memory of your laundry mixed with mine
So ordinary yet so intimate
In its nakedness
It was once the mortar of my life

My life is now without adhesive
The bricks of my being falling
Randomly
Toppling all aspects of my life

I am haunted by the many ways you loved me
When you filled my car with gasoline
Left a twenty dollar bill in my purse
Returned all those empty bottles
To buy my Christmas present every year
Most of all when you reached out to caress
To touch me in the night

I know I should be proud
I will try to be
Not just for your sacrifice
But also for your valor

I am now expected to fill a new role
Widow
It sits roughly on the tongue
More cruelly in my heart

I ask myself
Why could you not have been less?

Less zealous
Less theirs and more mine?

But would I have loved you thus?
Would you have been you or
Someone I could not love?

I look at our small son
Toddling across the floor
He is so like you

He returns my gaze
With your smiling green eyes
And hollows out my heart
Once again

Sue Falkner Wood

State

Calming the surreal
answering the draw to the sea
to the deadly call of the waves
unbound and free to roam
yet only the unconscious can see
the true light
the colors left by the human soul
smeared upon the wall
appears as evidence to the crime
of loving, of believing, of being
the truth brought into perspective
and presented to the world
or placed upon a pedestal
as proof of a God
that the mindless worship
and the intelligent fear
yet no one understands
the simple
and screams of life's complications
as the only way

Bethany Bradley

Drunny's Story

Once upon a time
Not so long ago
There was a little boy
My family did not know

My sister took him in
To make her family "three"
And sweet little Adrian
Became a part of "we"

We treasured him and nurtured him
We showered him with love
We looked at precious Adrian
As a gift from above

With new clean clothes and a warm soft bed
And healthy meals that nourished
We stood back in amazement
As our little boy, he flourished

His new parents had their differences
As people often do
And suddenly the time came
When they bid each other adieu

Then the adoption agency reached in
With their meddling hand
And stated it was for Drunny's good
They had to take a stand

They ripped him from our family
Drunny didn't quite know why
He could not stay with us and
He had to say goodbye

The adoption people told him
He'd get a new mom and dad
But still Drunny questioned
"What was wrong with the parents that I had?"

Still laws were laws
We had to comply
So with broken hearts
We told Drunny goodbye

A few years have passed
And now I look to the sky
With tear stained cheeks
"How did he die?"

Sweet Sweet Drunny...

You've flown up to the angels
Way up in the sky
Now it's time for your "Antana"
To say one last goodbye.

I love you Drunny Boy.

Tanya N. Teachman

What I Want for Christmas (Dedicated to Brenden Charles Weirup)

Dear Santa,
I have a wish to share with thee--
Not the typical wish, that you will see,
I ask not for trinkets, or treasures of gold,
But a secret wish, others may have told.

I ask not in selfishness, not for gain,
But to have a prayer answered, sunshine through rain.
This wish for my son, and all who like him be,
They suffer from autism, round the world times three.

It grows in numbers, and steals through the night,
It changes our loved ones, before morning's light.
We have these precious babes, to love, teach, and grow.
We hope all we can, they'll learn and speak and know.

These goals aren't reached by many, or maybe just a few
So just tonight, Dear Santa, I send this wish to you.
Please take a magic sleigh ride, wave a magic wand,
Rub hands on the reindeer, of whom you are so fond.

Take away this sadness, this darkness, this fog
Lift this and let them speak, we've waited so long.
Just one word, a loving look, is all I've ever asked.
Just one smile, a hug, a huge tremendous task.

I'd like to hear Hi Mommy, or just share a hug.
I'd like a look of fondness, or maybe looks of love.
Let all parents hear, the words of bliss
I love you mom and dad, give me a kiss!

Help them now, I start to cry.
And take this darkness from our eyes.
Take darkness from our families tonight,
And instead, give us joyous light.

I plead with you Santa, our last resort
We've tried schools and prayer, till our minds distort.
We leave it up to you tonight, in you we all believe.
This is our one special wish, this special Christmas Eve.

Charlene Weirup

Is There Any Other Way?

Who says you're like the day that's cold?
You're quieter. And smarter.
After the first of January you turn a cold shoulder,
But skin and color doesn't last, you're just older.
There are times in winter when people seem raw;
Other times they hint of a thaw.
I can love that season all year long!
I breathe the air; suck in the wind,
I feel strong!
There's always at least one leaf left on every tree
I will cling to, for just one more freeze,
 After I'm snuggled and put down to rest,
 I will love you even past my last breath.

David Lichner

The Allure of Potato Pancakes

Potatoes and grease,
it's that simple.
A little onion,
and applesauce, of course,
but basically,
it's potatoes and grease.
She brought them to the table,
perfectly crisp and hot,
three at a time.
Oh that mother martyr bit--
kitchen door shut,
window wide open,
knuckles bleeding into
the blue enameled bowl,
burn marks from oil splatters.
How come I can grate potatoes
without injury
and fry pancakes
in several skillets so all
can eat together?
Are mine therefore inferior?
She can have the laurel,
as in singing, and sewing.
That's not what our
competition is about.
It's about who
can live longest with grief.

Karin Temple

Roses

I hate flowers.
Roses, red as fallen cherries
A peace after the war
A dozen in her favorite vase on the kitchen table.
Alone and weak in the glass they stand.
Tall in silence new to the scene
They didn't hear the things he called her
Green leaves reach skyward
Thorns and words extend
But father shall on bended knee
to obliterate the things he said.
I will not forgive him
Even when she does
In their pompous superiority
I want to knock them to the floor
Oh bouquet of angels, fragrant of some love,
don't forget the things he called her--
because I never can.

Elaina Erola

Silence

when i write like this
using small letters
without punctuation
is it like talking
quietly together
among old friends
old friends
who at one time
had been very close
like roots among
many forest trees
that now have all died
and disappeared
into the earth

is it like talking
huddled together
in hushed tones
before a great sweep
of fast moving water
hurrying to the sea
or looking down
a long lake
with water so clear
you can almost
see into the center
of the earth

perhaps not even
these conversations
will heal the differences
the differences
that seem forever
to keep us apart
to keep us
hopelessly separated
like a great mountain
cleaved by powerful forces
into two stark
and naked walls
that share now
only the silence
between them
that silence
and the occasional
cry of wandering birds

perhaps our
new conversation
will be silence
the words will be
unspoken perhaps
even the silence
will be unspoken
and the cry of
passing birds
our only awareness

that we have indeed
heard the silence

Russel Hunter

Tangible Losses

Some things lodge in the middle of your chest
the way the butterscotch candy stuck
in my three year old's throat
till I caught her up, choking,

folded her over my braced forearm and gave her
a sharp thwack between the shoulder blades.
The golden temptation flew out
and cracked against the tile.

She cried, at first with fear and fury,
then later because the pain it left behind
was the sweet's exact dimensions
and seemed destined never to abate.

Some things confuse you for a time like that.
Their absence is material.
The ache they leave behind is solid as a hard boiled egg
hulking just behind your sternum.

You reach your hand up to ease the lump in your heart
as I once reached up to feel my brow
after my brother had pressed
a nickel to my forehead with his thumb.

He took his hand away and I raised mine
to touch that round, indelicate treasure,
certain it was fastened firmly in my flesh.
But it was gone.

Nadine Faith

Daydream

Silent walk through morning fog
Moonlight on the cobblestone
Steaming cocoa and warming stove
Child's lopsided blanket tent

Line and hook in forest stream
Small tin box of memories
Resting in the creaking hammock
Branches swaying above

Soothing strums of a Spanish guitar
Nestled under fanned green palms
Ocean foam laps the shore
Walking in wet sand

Aboard a giant sailing ship
White masts catch the wind
Soft sound of ropes and wood
Sail away to Neverland

Bill Kaspar

Iowa

In our first Spring in the old farm house
my wife takes my hand
and walks me outside

She bends down to break
the soil with her hands
Look, she says, some things
need to be done in time

When we walk back inside
I know she's listening
to a different drummer
but she does know
how to dance.

Don Hutton

Woman in Dress



Gillian Hall

She Sleeps Nights

She sleeps nights beneath
an open widow; no screen
to separate her from wind
rising in the meadow.

A blue-eyed Buddhist,
this woman has faith the world
will treat her as she deserves
in everything and nothing.

And when she strolls,
her manner tells men
passing by on the street,
"Write a poem about me"

though it is purely
unconscious, as she has
renounced the sensual
desires of the world.

And yet once in a while
carnal longings float
into her dreams
entirely unbidden,

and then she is no
less a woman because

she exists a little way
from everywhere.

Brian Harrison

Faithless

The four-year-old lovingly
fingers the plastic toy
before he buries it in
the soft loam of the yard.

It's not where he remembers
when he returns to retrieve it,
and regardless of remorse
the loss remains absolute.

The forty-year-old caresses
the shoulders of his wife
and then slinks away to
copulate with his mistress.

It's not where he remembers
when he returns to retrieve it,
and regardless of remorse
the loss remains absolute.

James Ricketts

Wisdom Image

For Richard Rowland

Horses gallop from the east
Beads of fear and courage drip from their brow
We listen to their tales of triumph over doubt and weakness
Building the shrine of faith that we all can accept
Their image in our thoughts makes our hair stand on end all
over our bodies and
We watch our limbs transform into silver hooves
That stomp across the desert
Leaving the trail for our children to follow

Dennis Maier

Fall Field Trip

Stuffed in the backseat of Carol's red Cherokee
Sharing space with soccer shoes, plastic bags loaded,
Bent soft-cover books and numerous other items she
apologizes for

Twisting behind my seatbelt--adjusted for a small child
As road rain sprays from slickery back tires and rotting
jackolanterns
Speed by, leaning on mossy doorsteps, the Young's River Falls
turn-off
Comes towards us--rushing

55 minutes ago, dreaming warmly under thick green flannel
Of a young, dead friend--speaking all-too-lively

15 minutes ago, sitting uneasily
Rain-soaked backpack between my knees
Cold six-pack inside
A welcome breakfast in the student bathroom
--thank the activists for this locking stall door--

In 12 minutes my large body--Carhart & black hoody--will
spill
Surfing slipslided down mudslides
Army issue boots mud brown
Whistling wildly on my own daring detour
To the water below

I find the small class near the Falls
(they found their own trails downward)

In a circle
Puffs of breath greeting the mist of the eternal picture, forever
developing
Rock tumbler, madwater cascade
--a large carbonated fountain of sweetness
brings us to a singing mood

One of the students
(whose reasons brought us here)
Begins to read a poem

He theorizes suicide on the wooden cross
Behind him
Shrouded in magic mushroom mycelium, mold
And memory

Beyond the cross I spy a silent poem
--a large coffin-shaped rock
A massive arrowhead of the gods
I anticipate the silence
(as much as you can find beside a 60 foot waterfall)
Of his finished poem
And bound off like a spooked deer
To inspect this rocky exclamation point

Over ten feet of grey obelisk
Towering over
Six feet of red-faced fascination

And I climb

And I find: a case of Corona, all bottles emptied

a soggy pack of menthols, empty
and a paper sack, nearly infused with the wet clay
of earth

Behind the secret stone

Within 60 minutes we'll be back at the campus
Stretching our legs and hustling to a classroom
Or another car for another drive to another place

But for the time being I cannot get past
The coffin-shaped boulder

I hope Carol understands
When I tell her, "thank you"

Rich Trucke

Child's Play

I don't remember how it happened or when,
only that, one-by-one, we broke with the faith,
and chose to believe no more.

Before, we were magician's apprentices
perfecting our sleight-of-hand.
We brought forth invading armies,
met them mounted on two-wheeled horses,
brandished picket fence broadswords.
We dropped dirt-clod bombs on toy soldiers,
built forts, found buried treasures.

Then one day the spell was broken,
our secret brotherhood disbanded,
our illusions banished.
I mourn its passing even now, pay tribute to it.
It brought our world to life,
warmed us with its mythic fire,
set our imaginations free to roam wild like the animals,
their locked horns and stomping hooves
animating our reality.

Vic Campbell

Lack of Faith

If one could see the truth in all
And could foresee that men shall fall
Despite their robes and kingly gowns,
Their gods and angels, saints and crowns

If then he saw it all a lie
This righteous ever judging eye
And put the holy men to shame
Misled by Zoroaster's fame

If he our past could clearly see
Untouched by fire and parting sea
What of the Christ and magi three
Or Buddha 'neath his giant tree

What reason then to wage a war
And spill our blood on land and shore
But if this faith we must defend
What choice is left but to pretend

Bill Kaspar

Apocalypse Hymn

False TV

It's leading you to nothing

Reality

It's leading you to nothing

Packaged ways

It's leading you to nothing

To rot for days

It's leading you to nothing

Kings and queens

The calm before the slaughter

Claiming things

The calm before the slaughter

Terrorists

The calm before the slaughter

Colored lists

The calm before the slaughter

Feast on mud

Part of a balanced budget

And human blood

Part of a balanced budget

Frosted flakes

Part of a balanced budget

Of corn-fed hate

Part of a balanced budget

Guys with stars
They know they've got the power
Pigs in cars
They know they've got the power
Bloated jails
They know they've got the power
Sirens wail
They know they've got the power

Designer drugs
Forget your heart is beating
Chemical hugs
Forget your heart is beating
Pawn your life
Forget your heart is beating
And kiss the knife
Forget your heart is beating

Burning trees
The smoke is getting thicker
To fuel Greenpeace
The smoke is getting thicker
Recycled lies
The smoke is getting thicker
And toxic skies
The smoke is getting thicker

The final crime
Hall-A-Bloody-Leuyah
The end of time
Hall-A-Bloody Leuyah
What's left is free
Hall-A-Bloody-Leuyah
Fatality
Hall-A-Bloody-Leuyah

Dustin Hughes

New World

So many problems
So many choices
So many rumors
None of my concern
So many favorites
So many races
So many stories
Feed all the faces

Tradition has lost the mighty gift
That keeps the family entertained
The boldest task is showing love
Without stepping foot inside a store

Imagination buried deep
Beneath the grounds of civil war
Now every town is common ground
And no one has time to think and fly

Rise and feel your tone
Wait, you're not alone
In this no-fly zone

Through the endless city of channels
Standards stagger to stay in the loop
Tour guides of life await your soul
To consume you with consumer cancer
And sanction your every single sense

Too many enemies
Too many tragedies
Too many actors
Too many answers
Too many brand names
Too many shows are lame
Too many crimes
Way Too much time
Too many documentaries
About celebrities
Too much sugar
Too much TV
Too much you don't need

Can you live?

Aleks Weir

Delirium Tremens (DT's)

O' realize I can never ever win,
all of the time I feel like I have failed.
Guilt and punishment coming from my sins,
and from my addiction which I have hailed.
Delirium Tremens running in me,
for I have brought all this upon myself.
Hallucinations are all I can see,
as for I crave the liquor on the shelf.
O' irritation--all I understand,
and feelings of emotion in my head.
Body malfunction from my shaking hands,
and for the cold sweat--I'd rather be dead.
 Wanted to be normal, my heart still strains.
 For alcohol, my love, this is my pain.

Jack Bartling

'tain't quite white

Some gets up-tight
if taint quite white.

Wants to fight
if taint pure white.

My pa don't cotton to urban blight.
He always says "taint quite white."

Yet Ma sez "it's quite all right"
to tell a lie that's mostly white.

I couldn't sleep at all last night
tryin to think of things pure white.

Grandad says that clouds is white,
they is by day, but not at night.

Most chickens lay eggs that's white,
still, them brown-uns taste all right.

At school they say the color white
is all made-up of spectrum light.

When them rainbows comes in sight,
they's breakin down the color white.

Don Overton

What Darkness Have You Known?

What darkness have you known?
Even on a bright morning
when the wind has torn away the fog
and shredded it to blue
is there still some tight and tiny knot
that will not loosen?
When you go down to the water
do you wish to be washed clean
or drown?
Do you pray?
And if you pray,
do you ask for vengeance, or forgiveness,
or simple, clear forgetting?
In that late hour of night
when you wake alone,
and the holes they left behind
are haunting you,
can you see
any light at all?

James Dott

Death Card

The game is subtle, if it is a game.

You don't get to be sure.

No dealer, no gypsy,

no way it makes sense,

but in your hand, this card.

The grimace of the upright skeleton,

his scythe, his cap, his pointed shoes,

the rough catch of your breath,

no one has to tell you

you're holding the card for death.

Whether you asked to play is moot,

or whether you hoped to know,

or how this came to stare back at you

as you simply opened your hand,

this is your card.

Your palm is sweating on the finish,

your fingers squeeze, but it won't go away.

You know until you lay this card

nothing else will play

and the card will still sit in your hand.

Florence Sage

Torturous Math

On and on and on he drones
as we slowly drop like flies
burnt from the light of the flame
it attracts us
it has purpose
yet we wish to jump out
the third story window
to our death
he speaks Greek to us
as if we understand
his foreign tongue
other students understand
...I must be stupid
numbers and letters
thrown together in a frenzy
as if any of this crap will be useful to me

I ask—again—what time it is
and again five minutes later
for God's sakes, when will this torture be over!
Only an hour left
...an hour
might as well be a year
I can't wait to walk out that door
hell, I can't wait until I never have to do
another math equation again
...ever!

Bethany Bradley

Phillip Worthington III

Sometimes people come into your life, and you wonder why they were brought into it. As I sit here writing this, I wonder why Phillip Worthington III was brought into my life.

I met Phillip at the hospital two towns over. After visiting my grandma who broke her hip salsa dancing, I went for a walk through the halls. That's where I met Philip. He was crying his eyes out, but looked prim and proper. I asked him if he was alright.

"Why yes old chap," he said, "I do believe I am fine." I could tell just by his fake accent that he was either rich, or liked to pretend he was rich. For some reason, I decided to continue on with the conversation with the next likely question, why was he crying.

"Oh, you see, my mother, Mumsy as I call her, just passed away." I apologized for his loss. "Oh for heaven's sake, I'm fine. I have to be. If I'm not, I won't be neat and organized. Mumsy always said that we may be rich, but we're not heathens. She was always coming up with pearls of wisdom like that. Too bad she's dead."

I asked him how "Mumsy" died. "During surgery. Routine face lift/breast augmentation. She'd had tons of face lifts. Who would've known she'd be fatally allergic to silicon?" I choked down my laughter while asking where his father was.

"Oh the old chap is visiting Gramsy. He's always visiting Gramsy. You see, she's not well, yet she's always traveling to these exotic places. Bermuda, the Bahamas, Aruba, and Jamaica, just to name a few. Dadums always pays the bill. I don't know why, but he always takes his

secretary/assistant along. Very peculiar don't you think chum?"

Sitting there, mouth open, and staring at the rich fool, I wanted to tell him that his father was having an affair with his secretary. But before I could, Phillip continued.

"I phoned Dadums just a few minutes after the good doctor told me that Mumsy had passed. He was sorry, and said he was flying right back, and he would have a surprise for me. I wonder what it could be? I already have everything I need. You see, Dadums is a billionaire. Invested wisely, and started his own sock making business. Who would have known that socks could make so much money? But they did. And now, Dadums has paid my way into Harvard. And he's even paid some of the house people to come with me. You know, to take my tests for me?"

Perplexed by this, I asked him what he meant. "Well, you don't think I got into Harvard just because my father paid for it do you? No, I had to get the grades. And how do you think I got those grades? My servants old chap. Jeeves takes care of English. Monique takes care of Math. Rosarita does Spanish. And old Jameson cover History. It's just fantastic."

Soon, a panting older man came running down the hall being followed by a bouncing blonde. She could only be described as a bimbo. She wore a shirt with her midriff showing, and she was promoting her cleavage like an actress promotes her movie. She wore a very short skirt to go along with the shirt, and of course, to compliment it all off; high heels.

"Son, I'm so sorry about your mother," the man said as he came up to Phillip.

"Oh Dadums," Phillip said, standing up to shake his father's hand. "Father, it was so awful. The surgeon came out

to tell me that Mumsy had passed on. But I didn't cry. No not me. No, I just handed him money and told him to take it back."

"Are you serious?" I almost screamed. The trio glanced at me, but quickly ignored me again.

"The surgeon wouldn't take your money, Son?"

"No Dadums, he wouldn't. So, then I came out here and called you." Phillip looked at the bouncing blonde bimbo standing next to his father. "Oh, Candy, you didn't need to come too."

Candy? What a name! What a fitting name at that. Of course, I kept my thoughts to myself.

"Oh, Phillip, Candy did have to come. You see, she is the surprise I talked about." Phillip looked confused at his father's words. "You see, now that your mother is gone, may she rest in peace of course, Candy and I have decided to get married."

"But Dadums! Why?"

"Phillip, I have been very lonely since your mother died. It has been very hard for me to go on living. There has been a hole of loneliness in my heart. Candy has filled that loneliness."

For sure I thought Phillip would see right past that obviously idiotic remark, and scold his father. I don't know why I was surprised when he didn't.

"Oh Dadums! I think that's just smashing! Let's go celebrate!"

As they walked off, a nurse came up to Phillip.

"Mr. Worthington, we need you to make arrangements for the body of your mother."

Phillip thought for a moment. "Oh just send her to a nice funeral home, and make sure she gets buried some place

nice. I don't have time for this. My Dadums just got engaged!"

As the three bumbling idiots frolicked off together into the sunset, I couldn't help wondering where their journeys would take them. Right off a cliff more than likely, but at least they would die together, as it should be since they all seemed so right for each other. And it also made me think about what money could do to a person's mind. Right then and there, I vowed to live a life of poverty.

James Pullman

Bookworm

the dog-eared picture of you sleeps between the pages
ages ago pressed into a wordless image:
smiling girlishly an unabridged dictionary of human attempt
to define a girlish smile

and the wordsmiths are left
no worse for the attempt

I pick this book from the stack
as others tumble to the floor

the picture bent
the ink shed
and not a single warm word to fill this bed

I find you where I left off
the night before

Rich Trucke

Tall

Do not ask how tall I am,
I do not wish to say.
In case you did not know, you see,
I'm asked that every day.

I'm weary, O so weary
Of another question too,
"Would you like to get a ball,
And shoot a hoop or two?"

When next you meet a person tall,
Do not think of basketball.
Do not ask the inseam size of his,
Nor how, up there, the weather is.

Do not tell him all your thoughts
About tall things and things-tall-not,
For he has heard them all before
And wishes he would hear no more.

Vic Campbell

Saturday Night

Five after five and the diners are seated
Potatoes are done but my rice is depleted
The driver has failed to deliver the salmon
In twenty-five minutes this place will be jammin'

The dishwasher's "sick," his replacement is missing
My stock has boiled over, the burners are hissing
The orders pile up, pork loins lay unfurled
But this is a day in the restaurant world

It isn't all stress and distress like above
In fact sometimes the bad times are what I most love
The food will go out so there's nothing to fear
For we close in three hours, the ending is near

Yes! In rolls the hand truck with salmon I ordered
"Hey Nate! Scale those bastards and get chickens quartered!"
The tongs have grown hot on the oven door latch
I am burned, drop a plate, but make one lucky catch

We've too many tables, who's handled the booking?
Seating's ev'ry half hour when just one man is cooking!
Hey look! There's the dishwasher sauntering in
His hair is a mess and he reeks of cheap gin

Now isn't the time to express my displeasure
He'll have to keep up, his sink full beyond measure
Should he pull this again we can legally fire him
I would send him home now but we greatly require him

“We’ve sold fifteen halibut! Only six more!”
But the servers run plates out, my warning ignored
Then word from the front: “It’s now slowing down.”
Let’s clean this place up and go out on the town

I take off my toque and change into some slacks
Pop into the watering hole to relax
The lights are dim here, no fluorescent annoyance
We all raise a glass and partake in the joyance

A couple has recognized Steven their server
They thank him again and they speak with much fervor
He says: “This is the chef,” and we are introduced
They loved everything, Yes. But especially that mousse

I’ve cooked their Anniversary Dinner I learn
As they praise me I no longer dwell on my burn
I’m filled with a joy as I remember a write
Of bad times, of good times, of Saturday night

Will Chapman

2005 Patrons

Robert & Elizabeth Stricklin

Gregory & Rita Hamann

Richard & Patricia Rowland

Audrey Knippa

Carol Knutson

Rising LITes

Nadine Faith

Will Chapman

Charlotte DeWitt

Deac Guidi

Christine Riehl

Joanie Weatherly

Ann Gydé

John & Mary Gydé



2005 Rain Staff

Dr. Julie Brown

Wanda Beck

Tanya N. Teachman

Maureen Brosius

Claire Conklin

James Pullman

Robin Andrea II

Chelsey Porter

Mathew Severson

Bethany Bradley

Jack Bartling

Elaina Erola

Dennis Maier

David rr Homer

Chrystal Zender